

the existing rules which we believe, as you know, require a majority vote for the hiring of a staff director. That is the way it has always been. From our perspective, that is the way it was intended to be. So it would be a bipartisan or, better yet, nonpartisan handling of the responsibility of the Ethics Committee.

I would hope that in the near term, next week and the days thereafter, that we would work together to try to get this moving forward. Because I think it is important to both sides of the aisle, it is important to the integrity of the House, and I think it is important to the American people.

Mr. BLUNT. I would say it would be hard to be more disappointed than I am that this committee has only met once because of continuing concerns. From the point of view of the majority, I am sure it is our view that we removed what we thought were the obstacles of this committee moving forward with its work, only to find that there is another obstacle. And we do need this committee to work, but all sides need to be looking for ways to make the committee work, not to just find the reasons that the committee does not work, which is my view of this. And we clearly want this committee to work, need this committee to work, and I think the majority has made substantial efforts both publicly and privately to create an opportunity where this committee could do its job.

Mr. HOYER. Reclaiming my time, I thank the gentleman, and I have no doubt about his sincerity in that desire. I would simply observe that had we had the opportunity to debate the privileged resolution, which really seeks to redress the House's positions, that perhaps we could have explored more broadly the differences that exist as they relate to the staffing of the committee. Both sides apparently believe that they are correct in their interpretation, but hopefully both sides want a bipartisan and not a partisan staff to proceed with its work.

Unless the gentleman wanted to say something, I would yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BLUNT. I appreciate what the whip has said and would only say that we could vote on this and solve it that way, but I assume that would not present the right solution as well.

Mr. HOYER. I think the gentleman is probably correct, and of course the resolution offered did not resolve the question. We understand that. But I think the gentleman is correct, it would not resolve it any more than the vote on the rules in January resolved the changing of the rules and the feeling that they were not appropriate to provide the context in which we could proceed.

I know that the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT) very honestly and sincerely, as I do, wants to see this matter resolved and see the committee move forward so it could become a matter of history and not a matter of

current debate so we can focus on the important issues confronting this country.

I appreciate the gentleman's comments.

ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY, JUNE 13, 2005

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 12:30 p.m. on Monday next for morning hour debates.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Missouri?

There was no objection.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday next.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Missouri?

There was no objection.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY COMMITTEE ON RULES ON AMENDMENT PROCESS FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2745, UNITED NATIONS REFORM ACT OF 2005

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, the Committee on Rules may meet next week to grant a rule which could limit the amendment process for floor consideration of H.R. 2745, the United Nations Reform Act of 2005. The bill was introduced on June 7, 2005, and referred to the Committee on International Relations which ordered the bill reported yesterday and is expected to file its report with the House tomorrow.

Any Member wishing to offer an amendment should submit 55 copies of the amendment and one copy of a brief explanation of the amendment to the Committee on Rules in room H-312 of the Capitol by 10 a.m. on Tuesday, June 14. Members should draft their amendments to the text of the bill as reported by the Committee on International Relations. Members are advised that the text of the bill will be available for their review on the Web sites of both the Committee on International Relations and the Committee on Rules.

Members should use the Office of Legislative Counsel to ensure their amendments are drafted in the most appropriate format. Members are also advised to check with the Office of the Parliamentarian to be certain their amendments comply with the rules of the House.

EXPRESSING THE IMPORTANCE OF IMMEDIATELY REOPENING THE FAMOUS BEARTOOTH ALL-AMERICAN HIGHWAY

Mr. POMBO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure be discharged from further consideration of the resolution (H. Res. 309) expressing the importance of immediately reopening the famous Beartooth All-American Highway from Red Lodge, Montana, to Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

Mr. REHBERG. Mr. Speaker, reserving the right to object, although I am not going to, I would like to sincerely thank the gentleman from California (Mr. POMBO) of the Committee on Resources and the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG) of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. I am sincerely grateful that they were willing to move this through on a unanimous consent as quickly as possible.

A crisis has occurred in Montana one more time. It seems like it is feast or famine for us. We were just going into our eighth year of drought, no rain, well beyond the opportunity to recover. And the prediction was it was going to take as much as 16 feet of snow in the mountain to get us caught up in the moisture. We began getting the rains and, unfortunately, the next thing that happened were mudslides closing off the Beartooth Pass.

Some Members might remember the Beartooth Pass was considered to be the crown jewel on the part of Charles Kuralt. As he traveled around the 50 States, he made the determination that of the 50 States that was the most beautiful part of the entire Nation. I am sure there are a lot of Members in this audience that might object to that definition. But if you look at the recorded list that he put together, the Beartooth Pass was something special.

Feast or famine in that area is nothing new. Cooke City, unfortunately, was the site of the 1988 fires in Yellowstone Park. Unfortunately, a forest fire came down within hundreds of feet of the community. They were able to withstand that economic devastation. This is going to create another economic devastation.

The detour that is going to be required to get to the community of Cooke City until this road is reopened probably is about the size of Illinois by the time you get around that detour. It is not just like taking a different route. It is like taking several different States. I know my colleague, the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Mrs. CUBIN), and my colleagues, the gentleman from Idaho (Mr. SIMPSON) and the gentleman from Idaho (Mr. OTTER), know the importance of Yellowstone Park to the

economy of our region. So we really need it.

The sense of urgency shown on the part of the gentleman from California (Chairman POMBO) just cannot be underestimated, and I thank the gentleman for that.

This severely impacts the economy of Carbon County, of Red Lodge, of Cooke City, of Billings, the surrounding area. It is going to be a very complicated fix because it is a switch back. If you have not been there, it ends at the top at about 10,000 feet, a chain of lakes, it is flat, and it is the north entrance to Yellowstone Park. As the mudslides occurred, it took several layers of that switchback out. I think the estimate I heard was about 500 tons of material are sitting on that road.

I will be flying that on Saturday by helicopter, taking a look at the devastation, but it has been an incredible effort, a community effort on the part of the Federal, State, and local jurisdictions as well as the communities coming together.

Again, I thank the gentleman from California (Chairman POMBO) for giving us the opportunity to move this very quickly.

Mrs. CUBIN. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. REHBERG. I yield to the gentleman from Wyoming.

Mrs. CUBIN. Mr. Speaker, I too would like to thank the chairman and encourage passage of this resolution.

The Beartooth Highway connects two cities in Montana, but it passes through Wyoming; and many people need to travel on the Beartooth Highway in order to get into Yellowstone National Park. For many, many years this highway has been sorely neglected. It is not safe in its current condition, but it has not been safe for a long time.

Yellowstone National Park is the crown gem of the park system, and it is important to the whole country. So this is something that the country needs to do at this time. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. POMBO. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. REHBERG. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. POMBO. Mr. Speaker, during the days of May 16 and May 17 of this year, devastating mudslides bisected six sections of the scenic Beartooth All-American Highway between Red Lodge, Montana and Yellowstone National Park. Consequently, visitors to Yellowstone National Park coming from the States of Montana and Wyoming are now and for the foreseeable future required to take a detour to get to the northeast entrance of our Nation's oldest park. This detour could be in place for the entire summer season. Annually, an average of 190,000 visitors come to the park through the northeast entrance.

Mr. Speaker, my resolution acknowledges the importance of the highway in accessing the park and requests that the President take all necessary action

to assist the State of Montana in reopening the road.

I thank the gentleman from Alaska (Chairman YOUNG) for allowing this bill to be scheduled. The following is an exchange of letters with him:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES,
Washington, DC, June 9, 2005.

Hon. DON YOUNG,
Chairman, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, 2165 Rayburn HOB, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your letter dated 9 June 2005 regarding House Resolution 309. I appreciate your willingness to allow the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure to be discharged to allow it to be considered on the Floor today. I will include a copy of your letter and my response to the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD during deliberations on the bill.

Thank you again for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

RICHARD W. POMBO,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE,
Washington, DC, June 9, 2005.

Hon. RICHARD W. POMBO,
Chairman, Committee on Resources,
1324 Longworth Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: I am writing to you concerning the jurisdiction interest of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee in matters being considered in H. Res. 309, expressing the importance of immediately reopening the Beartooth All-American Highway from Red Lodge, Montana, to Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming. As you know, the legislation was also referred to the Transportation Committee.

Our Committee recognizes the importance of H. Res. 309 and the need for the legislation to move expeditiously to the House Floor. Therefore, I am willing to have the Transportation Committee discharged from consideration of the resolution. I would appreciate if it you would include a copy of this letter and your response to the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

DON YOUNG,
Chairman.

I would like to thank the gentleman from Montana (Mr. REHBERG) and the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Mrs. CUBIN) for working with me to move this resolution so quickly through the House.

Mr. REHBERG. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman not only for his sense of urgency but his kind consideration in letting me go out of turn in my statement. I thank the chairman. I thank the House of Representatives for its positive consideration of this piece of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Montana?

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 309

Whereas on March 1, 1872, Yellowstone was established as the world's first national park;

Whereas Yellowstone National Park encompasses over 2 million acres and is one of America's Crown Jewels of the National Park System;

Whereas over 2.8 million people visit Yellowstone National Park annually to admire its world famous geysers, hot springs, and remarkable wildlife, and to hike its more than 950 miles of backcountry trails;

Whereas on May 16-17, 2005, a major mudslide bisected the scenic Beartooth Highway in 6 sections requiring visitors from Montana to undertake a detour to the Northeast Entrance to Yellowstone National Park;

Whereas the scenic Beartooth Highway provides on average 190,000 visitors annually easy access to the Northeast Entrance to Yellowstone National Park;

Whereas the scenic Beartooth Highway has been recognized as one of the most scenic drives in the United States; and

Whereas the scenic Beartooth Highway is the economic artery for the citizens of the gateway communities of Red Lodge, Cooke City, and Silver Gate, Montana: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes the critical importance of ensuring unfettered access to visitors of Yellowstone National Park and preserving the economy of Red Lodge, Montana; and

(2) urges the President to take, without hesitation, all necessary actions to assist the Governor of Montana in reopening, as quickly as possible, the scenic Beartooth Highway that provides access to Yellowstone National Park.

The resolution is agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

HONORING HOUSE PAGES

(Mr. SHIMKUS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the page class of 2005 to come down and take seats in the first two rows. While we are doing that, I would like to yield to my colleague and friend, the minority whip, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), who is on a time crunch and always likes to say good-bye to our page class.

Mr. HOYER. I thank my friend, and I thank him for the work that he does with the Page Board. His leadership and faithfulness in this effort is very much appreciated, I know, by these young people but appreciated also by the Republican Party and the Democratic Party.

I always like to have this opportunity to thank you young people. You have had an extraordinary opportunity which millions and millions of those your age will never have. You have had an opportunity to see firsthand the operations of the people's House, the House that was established by our Founding Fathers to reflect, as they viewed it, the passions of the people from time to time. That is why we have 2-year elections.

□ 1345

That is why the only way you can serve in the House of Representatives is to be elected. You cannot be appointed. You can be appointed to the